Empowering Equality: Gender and Social Justice in Artisanal and Small-scale Mining and Resource Management

Anna Nguno
Deputy Director
Geological Survey of Namibia
UNFC-AMREC Technical Working Group member
Anna.Nguno@mme.gov.na
http://www.mme.gov.na/gs
Artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) is a key sector for the supply of a wide variety of precious minerals and revenues for many people; e.g., on a global scale, ASM production account for:

- 25% of the world’s Diamond supply,
- 20% of the world’s gold,
- 80% of the world’s sapphire,
- 25% of the world’s overall tin extraction,
- and 80% of the world’s coloured gemstone.

Despite facing environmental, human rights, and health and safety challenges, artisanal and small-scale miners play a vital role in their communities and the global economy.
Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining (ASM) sector employs:

- **Globally**
  - Approximately 45 million people (in 80 countries), and indirectly supports 150 million
  - Women make up about 30 to 50% of the ASM workforce

- **Africa**
  - Approximately 8 million Africans across the continent and supports more than 45 million indirectly
  - Women make up about 40 to 50% of the 8 million workforce
Human Rights are fundamental rights and freedoms inherent to all people, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, or other status. In the context of ASM, human rights concerns include:

- **Right to life, liberty, and security**: This includes ensuring safe working conditions and preventing accidents, injuries, and fatalities.

- **Right to health**: Workers should have access to appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and healthcare services.

- **Right to fair and safe working conditions**: This encompasses adequate pay, reasonable working hours, and protection from forced labour.

- **Right to education**: Children should not be involved in hazardous work and should have access to education.
Gender in the context of Artisanal And Small-scale Mining (ASM) refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities, and expectations associated with being a woman or man.

It's crucial to understand how these roles impact participation and experiences within the ASM sector. Here's how:

- **Unequal access and control:** Women often face barriers to accessing lucrative mining claims, tools, and financing. They might be relegated to less profitable tasks like processing ore or excluded from decision-making.

- **Gender-based violence and harassment:** Women in ASM settings can be vulnerable to sexual harassment, exploitation, and even violence due to their perceived vulnerability.

- **Health and safety risks:** Pregnant or breastfeeding women might face additional health risks due to exposure to hazardous materials or lack of adequate sanitation facilities.
GENDER AND HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES IN AFRICAN ASM

Issues include

- **Gender Inequality:**
  - Lack of women's participation in decision-making and ownership.
  - Gender-based violence and harassment.
  - Unequal access to resources (land, equipment, finance).

- **Human Rights Concerns:**
  - Child labor in ASM.
  - Unsafe working conditions and health risks.
  - Environmental degradation impacting communities.

Rachel Perks wrote “Equality and empowerment of women and girls will not be possible until their rights are secured in legal frameworks”.
African Mineral and Energy Resources Classification and Management System (AMREC)

- A comprehensive system for management of Africa’s mineral and energy resources, which based on UNFC and UNRMS.
- Aligned to Africa Mining Vision (AMV), Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- Includes the Pan-African Resource Reporting Code (PARC)
When it comes to the Social and Environmental Considerations, some of the aspects considered include:

- Human rights
- Rights of Workers
- Rights of Women
- Rights of Children
- Rights of local populations and local communities
- Age consideration issues
- Site remediation and financial guarantees

The African Mining Vision (AMV), which calls for the “Transparent, equitable and optimal exploitation of mineral resources to underpin broad-based sustainable growth and socio-economic development”; also calls for more progress on gender equality including the “empowerment of women through integrating gender equity in mining policies, laws, regulations, standards and codes.”

Rights of Women

“The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in 1948, enshrines "the equal rights of men and women", and addressed both the equality and equity issues. In 1979, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)"
UNFC-AMREC/PARC AS A TOOL FOR EMPOWERING EQUALITY IN ASM

AMREC provides the rules and guidelines for public disclosure through Pan-African Resources Reporting Code (PARC).

Reporting for Artisanal-scale mining is also catered for and includes:

- Project description,
- Location and accessibility,
- Prospecting, exploration data information
- Technical studies (mining Methods, processing, recovery methods and production rates)
- Legal permits and governance
- Environmental Studies, Social and Community Impact
Empowering Equality: Gender and Social Justice in Artisanal and Small-scale Mining and Resource Management

There is need to:

➢ Ensure laws, policies, regulations, and practices affecting the ASM sector serve to improve women’s security and reduce gender inequality

➢ Provide capacity building, training, and awareness-raising to increase the economic benefits that women derive from ASM

➢ Integrate gender equality in resource management in the ASM sector

➢ Cooperate, coordinate amongst various stakeholders (Government, NGO, Academic, private sector, Development partner)
Thank you